

# Management Plan Review

## Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

### Scoping Meetings

#### The FGBNMS is beginning its Management Plan Review

A sanctuary management plan is a site-specific planning and management document that describes the objectives, policies and activities for a sanctuary. Management plans generally outline regulatory goals, describe boundaries, identify staffing and budget needs, set priorities and performance measures for resource protection, research and education programs. They also guide the development of future management activities. The Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary (FGBNMS) is required by law to periodically review this plan to ensure that it continues to best conserve, protect and enhance the sanctuary's resources.

#### Public Scoping Meetings

Date	Location	Time	Venue
October 17, 2006	Webster, TX (Houston/Galveston)	7:00-10:00 p.m.	Webster Civic Center 311 Pennsylvania Street Webster, Texas 77598
October 19, 2006	Corpus Christi, TX	7:00-10:00 p.m.	Harte Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi 6300 Ocean Drive Corpus Christi, Texas 78412
October 24, 2006	New Orleans, LA	7:00-10:00 p.m.	Audubon Zoo - Dominion Learning Center 6500 Magazine Street New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

#### What are scoping meetings?

At the onset of management plan review, the National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) holds public meetings to “scope out” or get input from resource users, interest groups, government agencies, and other members of the public on resource management issues. This input will help define the range of issues that the program needs to address during management plan review.

#### What kind of comments are we looking for?

Scoping meetings provide an opportunity for people to make direct comments to the NMSP and the local sanctuary on issues related to management of the sanctuary's natural and cultural resources and overall administration. We encourage interested members of the public to participate in the management plan review and welcome any comments related to the sanctuary. In particular, we are interested in hearing about the public's view on:

- effectiveness of the existing management plan in protecting sanctuary resources;
- emerging sanctuary resource management issues;
- resource protection programs (such as endangered species management and enforcement);
- research and monitoring programs;
- education, volunteer, and outreach programs;
- adequacy of existing boundaries, including zones, to protect sanctuary resources;
- assessment of the existing operational and administrative framework (staffing, offices, vessels, etc.).



For more information, visit the **Management Plan Review** link on the sanctuary website:

<http://flowergarden.noaa.gov>

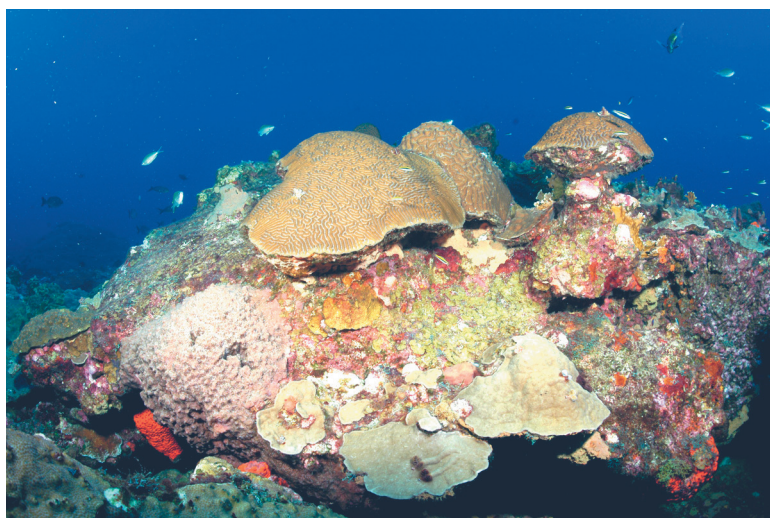
## How can you provide input?

The NMSP and the local sanctuary encourages interested members of the public to participate and provide comments at one of the scoping meetings held in communities throughout the sanctuary region (see reverse side for meeting dates, times, and locations). Each meeting is equally important. During the meetings, participants may comment on the issues listed above and others related to the local sanctuary. Those unable to attend the scoping meetings in person can mail or fax written comments directly to the sanctuary office. Comments may also be submitted to [fgbmanagementplan@noaa.gov](mailto:fgbmanagementplan@noaa.gov) via email. The public comment period remains open until November 10, 2006.



## What can you expect at the scoping meetings?

Scoping meetings provide a forum for the public to provide comments to the sanctuary staff at the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. They are not decision-making meetings. Meetings will generally follow a similar format, but they will be flexible enough to accommodate the number of people in attendance and the physical constraints of each location. At the beginning of each scoping meeting, sanctuary staff will provide all the participants with a summary of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary and the Gulf of Mexico region, and the management plan review process. Staff will detail the scoping meeting format and will answer any questions. Following the introduction, the group will break up into discussion groups. A group leader will help guide the discussion and ensure everyone has the opportunity to provide comments. Each group will have a recorder who will summarize each of the comments on a chart so the group can see their comments are being recorded.



## What's next after scoping?

Comments from each of the scoping meetings, as well as written comments and email, will be summarized and posted on the website which can be found at [flowergarden.noaa.gov](http://flowergarden.noaa.gov). The sanctuary will work with the Sanctuary Advisory Council and other members of the public to help prioritize issues to be addressed during this management plan review and later to develop a draft management plan.

The public comment period on the *State of the Sanctuary Report* will remain open until November 10, 2006. The report is available online at <http://flowergarden.noaa.gov> through the Management Plan Review link. To receive a hard copy of the report, please email [fgbmanagementplan@noaa.gov](mailto:fgbmanagementplan@noaa.gov) with your request.



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